BIBLE STUDY GUIDE -1st John

**WEEK 1:** READ: I John 1:1—10

1. List all the reasons given in this first chapter to support John’s claim that he is a reliable

witness.

2. What is his purpose in writing this letter?

3. What do you understand the word “fellowship” to mean?

4. Do you think that there is a difference between the fellowship to be experienced

between John and his readers and the fellowship experienced by John with the Father

and His Son, Jesus Christ (v.3)? Explain.

5. What characteristic of God must be acknowledged in order to have fellowship with

Him?

6. By what test is our fellowship determined?

7. How does John answer the implied claim that it is necessary to have a sinless life in

order to have fellowship with the Father and the Son?

8. How then is our fellowship with God maintained?

9. List the false beliefs that John is correcting in this chapter.

**NOTE**: Meaning of “walk” as used in I John: “to march in (military) rank; to keep step; (fig.) to conform to virtue and piety; walk (orderly).” Strongs Concordance #4748

10. How would you identify a person who is walking in the darkness?

11. How would you identify a person who is walking in the light?

**PERSONAL REFLECTION:**

12. Review the information given in this chapter and ask yourself:

a) Are there things I should be doing? List them.

b) Are there things I should not be doing? List them.

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE -1st John

 **WEEK 2:** READ: I John 2:1—17

1. Explain in your own words the meaning of verses 1 and 2 of this chapter.

2. By what test can our knowledge of God be determined?

3. From chapters one and two list the statements which identify a person as a liar.

4. Why does John link love and obedience together (v.4 & 5)?

5. How is the profession of life in Christ to be supported?

6. List at least four ways in which you could fulfill this requirement.

7. Explain vs. 7 & 8 in your own words.

8. What is the next test of a true believer?

***NOTE:*** *Meaning of “hate” in 1st John: - to detest (esp. to persecute); by extension - to love*

*less; hate(full). (Strong’s concordance — #3404)*

9. What reason is given for this wrong behavior?

10. List the identifying marks of the following to whom John writes:
- Children / Fathers / Young men

***NOTE****: Re: vs.12—14 - Of the varied explanations given for the terms used, “children”, “fathers”, “young men”, I best like Dodd’s explanation. He thinks the writer is simply using a rhetorical device to indicate qualities appropriate to the three stages of life, which ought to be true of all believers. All Christians should have the innocence of children, the strength of youth, and the maturity of age. (N.I.C.N.T. — Epistle of John, Friarshall, p.138)*

**PERSONAL REFLECTION:**Which of these are true in your own experience?

Identify the area in which your credibility as a believer is weak. Think of some positive

steps you can take this week to rectify this problem. List them here.

***NOTE****: Meaning of “world” as used in I John: It is not the world as God intended it to be but ‘this world’ set over against God, following its own wisdom and living by the light of its own reason... The two dominant characteristics of ‘this world’ are pride, which leads (man) to act as though he, . .were the lord and giver of life; and covetousness, which causes him to desire and possess all that is attractive to his physical senses. (New Bible Dictionary, p.1339)*

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE -1st John

**WEEK 3 & 4:** READ: I John 3:1—24

1. Why are we called “children of God”?

2. What is the meaning of the statement: “The reason the world does not know us is that it

did not know Him.”

3. What stimulates us to lead a pure life?

4. What two activities are mutually exclusive?

5. By what test can the children of God be identified?

6. What is the significance of the phrase “No one born of God continues to sin (NIV)” or

“doth not commit sin (KJV)”

7. Do these verses teach that “real” Christians never sin? Give Biblical support for your

answer.

8. What second identifying characteristic of the children of God is presented in this

chapter?

9. Whose evil example are we to shun and why?

10. How can we know that we belong to the truth?

11. What benefit is tied to the practical expression of our love to one another?

12. List the two commands we have been given.

**PERSONAL REFLECTION:**

Does the information contained in this chapter require any change in your behavior?

Commit yourself to some practical step in righteousness or love.

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE -1st John

 **WEEK 5:** READ: I John 4:1-21

1. Why is it necessary to test the spirits?

2. What particular error is identified in these opening verses?

3. Explain the meaning of vs. 4—6

4. List the reasons given for loving one another.

5. In what two ways has God demonstrated his love for us?

6. Does your salvation depend upon how you feel?

- Support your answer from this chapter.

7. What is the essential requirement for participation in God’s life?

8. Since “living” or “dwelling” in love is a proof that God lives in us, explain what this means

and give an illustration.

9. How are the acts of love done by unbelievers to be explained?

10. Why is the writer able to say “in the world we are like him” (NIV) or, “as He is, so are we

in this world” (KJV)?

11. What test of genuine love for God is re—emphasized in this passage (vs. 19-21)?

**PERSONAL REFLECTION:**

The Human Rights Movement calls for legal protection against discrimination on the

basis of sex or religious belief. How can Christians avoid compromising the truth of

Scripture in these situations?

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE -1st John

**WEEK 6:** Read 1st John 5:1-21

1. What are the two errors in belief that are proved false by verse 1 of chapter 5?

2. How is our love for God demonstrated?

3. Why is believing that Jesus is the Son of God the key to overcoming the world?

***NOTE:*** *re. vs.6—8. Late manuscripts of the Vulgate add: “. . .testify in Heaven; the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit and these three are one. And there are three that agree on earth...” This addition is retained in the KJV but is clearly a late gloss and it has no base in early manuscripts. (Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Vol.XII)*

*“The purpose of the statement seems clear. The author once more affirms that it is the historical Jesus who is the Christ, the Son of God. Although the false teachers may have acknowledged Christ as the Savior, the divine Son of God, they denied his true human existence. Like Cerinthus, they probably held that the Christ came on the man Jesus at his baptism and remained till the time of the Crucifixion. In this way they could deny that the Christ had ever been truly human and subject to suffering and death. The author rightly regards this as a denial of the redemptive activity of God. It was the Son of God who came into the world. It*

*was this same divine Son who was baptized and received the Spirit. It was the Son who, with the Father’s approval and in fulfillment of the Father’s intention, shed his blood on the cross to redeem humanity. God would not be involved in man’s redemption apart from the Christ’s true humanity, suffering, and dying. Water and blood become, therefore, the key words of the true understanding of the Incarnation... Dodd says, The Spirit is, as we have seen, both a factor in the historical life of Jesus, and a continuing factor in the experience of the Church. Similarly, the baptism and the crucifixion are authenticated facts in history, and as such bear witness to the reality of the incarnate life of the Son of God Thus the apostolic faith is authenticated against all false teaching by a three fold testimony: The living voice of prophecy, and the two evangelical sacraments: and the three of them are in accord.”*

*(Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Vol.XII, pp.350 & 351)*

4.A) Why does John say that we should accept God’s “testimony” or, “witness”?

4.B) On what occasions did God testify regarding His Son?

5. Verse 10 says that anyone who believes in the Son of God has this testimony in his heart.

What do you think this means?

6. On what is God’s gift of eternal life dependent?

7. What is John’s purpose for writing this letter?

8. Explain the meaning of vs. 14 and 15.

9. What should be our response to sin in the lives of other believers?

10. Why is the person who is born of God able to live a life free from the control of sin?

11. Re-read the epistle and list the crucial statements which are made about Jesus.

**PERSONAL REFLECTION:**

Vs. 3 of this chapter says “this is love for God: to obey His commands, and his

commands are not burdensome” (NIV). Think about your own experience. Is this true?

Why or why not?